NEWS ALERT
For Immediate Release

Foreign Policy Association
NATIONAL OPINION BALLOT REPORT

DIPLOMACY, NOT MILITARY POWER, CONSIDERED MOST EFFECTIVE IN PROJECTING U.S. INFLUENCE, NATIONAL OPINION BALLOT REPORT SHOWS.

October 1988 - Results of an opinion survey of 6,222 participants in the Foreign Policy Association's nationwide **Great Decisions** study and discussion program offer special perspectives not only for Washington policymakers but for Democratic and Republican candidates and all those interested in foreign policy issues. The participants, who cast their ballots between February and July 1988, include a significant percentage of community leaders. Over 60 percent have college or advanced degrees. And they are from all regions of the country. The top 10 states in terms of ballots received are Oregon, California, Florida, Washington State, Ohio, Illinois, New York, Colorado, Pennsylvania and Maryland.

The presence of a gender gap--and an age gap--on U.S. foreign policy issues is reflected in the National Opinion Ballot Report, prepared by Helmut Norpoth, professor of political science at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and a former consultant to the New York Times/CBS News Poll. Asked whether "military power" or "diplomacy" was more effective in projecting U.S. influence, male participants checked "military power" twice as often as did female participants. Even more pronounced was the age gap. The younger respondents (up to 30 years of age) --especially those still in high school--were far more partial to military options and get-tough policies than their elders (over 30).

Other highlights of the Great Decisions 1988 *opinion survey:*

- Only a minority views the U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf as a "very effective" policy.
- In regard to safeguarding U.S. interests in the Middle East, the same percentage of respondents favored recognizing the PLO as opted for continued strong support for Israel.
- Soviet participation in the Middle East peace process is viewed more favorably than U.S. military intervention in the Persian Gulf.
- The U.S. should not diminish its own contribution to NATO but it should encourage its NATO partners to do more for their own defense.
- In its dealings with Mexico, it is more important for the U.S. to improve relations rather than to press Mexico on drug traffic, illegal migration or supporting U.S. policy in Central America.

Ballots are part of the ***Great Decisions 1988*** *briefing book, prepared by the editors of the national nonpartisan Foreign Policy Association. The 96-page book includes impartial background and analyses of eight critical foreign policy issues facing the U.S. More than 250,000 Americans joined in study and discussion of the eight topics. This is the 34th year of the nationwide Great Decisions study and discussion program, the largest citizen education program of its kind in the country.*

DIFFERENCES OF OPINIONS AMONG PARTICIPANTS: GENDER, AGE AND EDUCATION

As always with opinions on political issues, certain kinds of people are more likely to prefer particular options than do other kinds of people. Men, for example, are often thought to take a harder line in foreign policy than is true for women. This appears to be borne out by this poll. On the question of what is most effective in projecting U.S. influence, male participants checked "military power" twice as often as did female participants. At the same time, women inclined far more strongly toward the "diplomacy" option. There is clear evidence of a gender gap on this basic question of foreign policy.

There is also an age gap, which is even more pronounced. The younger respondents (up to 30 years of age) proved far more enamored of military power than their elders (over 30) and far less of diplomacy. This age gap may largely account for another gap, along educational lines. Respondents with not more than a high school diploma favored military power considerably more than is true for more highly educated respondents. Those still in high school proved especially fond of the macho alternative.

Traveling abroad, as indicated by the possession of a valid passport, or living abroad for a considerable stretch of time made only a small difference for these preferences. Opinion leaders, that is those who were asked for their opinions on foreign matters often, divided very much the same between those options as did respondents who were hardly ever asked for their opinions.

In general, men, the young and the less well-educated were more inclined than women, older and more educated respondents to rate military options and get-tough policies as effective; they appeared less persuaded of the effectiveness of negotiations or of accommodating adversaries of the U.S., be it the Soviet Union or the PLO.

The most effective way for the U.S. to project its influence.

	Military Power	vs. Diplomacy
Men	21%	35%
Women	10%	40%
Aged 30 years or less	25%	28%
Over 30	11%	41%
High school education or less	22%	32%
More than high school education	14%	39%
Have valid passports	13%	40%
Do not have valid passports	18%	35%
Have lived abroad for 6 months or more	15%	37%
Asked for opinion on foreign matters:		
Often	15%	40%
Hardly ever	15%	36%

CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS

The 6,222 participants who mailed in their ballots are no cross section of the American public. Women outnumber men by three to two. The majority are over 60 years old. The states with the ten largest numbers of participants are (in this order): Oregon, California, Florida, Washington State, Ohio, Illinois, New York, Colorado, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Almost one third of the participants had graduated from college, another third had obtained advanced degrees and one quarter had some college education. Many can be considered "opinion leaders" on matters of foreign policy: one in seven said they were often asked for their opinion on such matters, and half said this happened sometimes. And they are especially attuned to conditions and events outside the U.S. Six of ten report having a valid passport and three of ten report having lived abroad six months or longer.

*A. **How many years have you participated in the Great Decisions program (that is, attended one or more discussion sessions)?***

This is the first year I have participated	43%
I participated in one previous year	14%
I participated in more than one previous year	43%

B. Age

17 or under	4%
18 to 30	19%
31 to 45	7%
46 to 60	13%
61 or over	57%

C. Sex

Female	59%
Male	41%

D. Do you have a valid passport?

Have	62%
Have not	38%

E. Have you lived abroad for six months or more?

Have	28%
Have not	72%

F. Are you currently a student?

Not a student	58%
Enrolled in high school	7%
Enrolled in college	17%
Enrolled in graduate school	1%
Enrolled in adult education course(s)	17%

*G. **What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?***

Some high school	6%
High school graduate	7%
Some college	26%
College graduate	31%
Advanced degree	31%

*H. **How often are you asked for your opinion on foreign policy matters?***

Often	15%
Sometimes	51%
Hardly ever	34%

*I. **Would you say you have or have not changed your opinion in a fairly significant way as a result of taking part in the Great Decisions program?***

Have	43%
Have not	34%
Uncertain	23%

(C) Punch Ionicus

Topic 1: U.S. FOREIGN POLICY
Projecting U.S. Influence

Participants were asked to indicate which of several policies they thought was most effective for the U.S. to project its influence. In response, the highest proportion chose the alternative "diplomacy," far ahead of "military power." Other nonmilitary means like "trade policy" and "development aid," while less often cited, still enjoyed far greater support than "military aid" and "covert action." By the same token, covert action and military power led the rankings of the "least effective" list.

From the moment that President Ronald Reagan took office, the U.S. government has been trying to aid the contras in Nicaragua. Yet only 7% of the respondents felt that this policy was "very effective" in advancing U.S. interests. A somewhat greater proportion so rated the 1983 "invasion of Grenada," but even on this issue more respondents felt that the invasion was "not effective." Only 18% rated the U.S. military presence in the Persian Gulf as "very effective." While that share exceeded the proportion rating it as "not effective," two thirds gave it an in-between rating. The general buildup of American military forces, a key policy of the Reagan Administration, elicited similar replies.

Respondents left little doubt that they considered "arms control negotiations" an effective means of advancing U.S. interests. Almost half of them rated it "very effective" compared with one in fifty who gave it a "not effective" rating. The same strong support for negotiations can also be seen in regard to promoting a peace conference in the Middle East. By a margin of 4-1, respondents rated such a policy as "very effective" as opposed to "not effective." By a similar margin, a get-tough policy in a nonmilitary domain, namely "trade protectionism," was dismissed as "not effective."

Issue A. The most effective way for the U.S. to project its influence.

Diplomacy	38%
Trade policy	23%
Development aid	13%
Military power	15%
Information programs	4%
Military aid	2%
Covert action	1%

Issue B. How would you rate the following U.S. foreign policies in terms of advancing U.S. interests?

	very effective	somewhat effective	not very effective	not effective
Support of Nicaraguan contras	7%	24%	29%	40%
Invasion of Grenada	22%	23%	24%	31%
U.S. military buildup	18%	41%	25%	15%
U.S. military presence in Persian Gulf	18%	47%	24%	11%
Arms control negotiations	49%	40%	10%	2%
Trade protectionism	7%	23%	40%	30%
Promoting Middle East peace conference	33%	36%	23%	8%

Topic 2: MEXICO & THE U.S.
Ambivalent Allies

Relations with the U.S. neighbor to the south tend to be strained by drug traffic, illegal immigration and the mounting Mexican debt burden. Yet none of those issues topped the list of what respondents considered the "most important" goals for U.S. policy toward Mexico. By far the largest group of respondents rated the improvement of bilateral relations as "most important." Only 19% pointed to the restriction of the drug traffic, 10% to the restriction of illegal migration and 10% to helping relieve Mexico's debt burden. Hardly anyone put much stock in pressuring Mexico to support U.S. policy in Central America. What seems most important to the respondents is a good-neighbor rapport without either pushing the other side or propping it up.

The most important goal of U.S. policy toward Mexico.

Restrict drug traffic.	19%
Restrict illegal migration to U.S.	10%
Form a free-trade zone.	10%
Improve bilateral relations.	45%
Assure continued access to oil.	5%
Help relieve Mexico's debt burden.	10%
Pressure Mexico to support U.S. policy in Central America.	2%

Topic 3: U.S. TRADE & GLOBAL MARKETS
Risks & Opportunities

The U.S. trade deficit, most people realize, is not something that can be solved without paying a price. Whether or not they are willing to pay that price depends on what they value most. Asked to indicate what was most important to them in this connection, respondents by a wide margin opted for free trade rather than protectionism. Four out of ten preferred to see further reductions in trade barriers, and an almost equal number wanted to see the U.S. maintain its ranking as an economic giant even if that entails more free trade and competition for the U.S. In contrast, only one in ten said the U.S. should maintain its steel and automobile industries, even if they must be protected.

Asked to choose from among various alternatives to reduce the trade deficit, by far the most respondents opted for cutting the other deficit, that of the Federal budget. They outnumbered by 10-1 those who favored protectionist legislation. The appeal to American patriotism (buy American!) was not judged very effective either. The only policy that enjoyed a measure of support in the survey was a policy to encourage industries with a comparative advantage. On the issue of trade, the faith of respondents in international efforts to try to stabilize the dollar was surprisingly weak.

Issue A. The solution of the trade deficit is likely to present difficult trade-offs for the American public. Which of the following is most important to you?

Low-cost consumer products, even if they are foreign-made.	10%
Maintaining U.S. steel and automobile industries, even if they must be protected.	11%
Ranking No. 1 among world economic powers, even if it entails a stronger commitment to free trade and greater competition for U.S. goods.	36%
High wages and profits, even if they make U.S. products less competitive than those from other countries.	2%
Negotiating further reductions in trade barriers, even if some U.S. exports suffer.	41%

Issue B. Which policy would be most effective in reducing the trade deficit?

Encouraging Americans to purchase only those goods made in the U.S.	8%
Reducing the Federal budget deficit.	43%
Having a "Marshall Plan" for Latin America to encourage purchases of U.S. products.	5%
Passing legislation protecting U.S. industries.	4%
Encouraging those industries in which the U.S. has a comparative advantage.	22%
Retraining workers in industries that are no longer competitive.	9%
Holding regular international meetings to try to stabilize the value of the dollar.	9%

Topic 4: THE SOVIET UNION
Gorbachev's Reforms

In dealing with the other superpower, the U.S. rarely considers trade as a purely economic matter. Here, concern for national security or for human rights within the Soviet Union often casts a special light on economic ties. In this poll, however, the majority of respondents favored loosening barriers to American-Soviet trade without conditions and welcoming Soviet participation in international economic organizations. A strong minority, on the other hand, indicated that the U.S. should loosen such barriers only if the Soviets relaxed their emigration policy and did better on human rights. A tiny minority, in turn, wanted no part of any loosening, fearing that economic benefits would only render the Soviets a more dangerous adversary.

Only a tiny few among the respondents also opposed new arms control agreements with the Soviets, fearful that the other side would only gain a breathing spell for its military buildup. Two thirds, on the other hand, wanted the U.S. to take advantage of Mikhail Gorbachev's eagerness for arms control and hoped that the two sides would broaden their dialogue on this issue. The rest also favored arms control agreements with the Soviets, but did so because it would benefit the U.S. economically and strategically.

Issue A. In economic relations with the Soviet Union, the U.S. should:

Loosen barriers to U.S.-Soviet trade and support Soviet participation in international economic organizations.	54%
Make loosening of trade barriers contingent on relaxation of Soviet emigration policy and improvements in recognition of human rights.	39%
Seek to block efforts of U.S.S.R. to integrate its economy into the global economy because the economic benefits the Soviet Union would realize would help make it a stronger and more dangerous adversary.	7%

Issue B. In the field of arms control, the U.S. should:

Resist signing arms control agreements because the Soviets cannot be trusted and arms control would provide Gorbachev with a breathing space to build a stronger Soviet military.	6%
Take advantage of Gorbachev's eagerness for arms control agreements so that the U.S. and Soviet Union can intensify talks on a broad range of issues.	67%
Seek arms control agreements because, regardless of their effect on the Soviets, such agreements are in the U.S. interest economically and strategically.	27%

Topic 5: U.S. & THE MIDDLE EAST
Dangerous Drift?

In few troubled regions of the world is the U.S. more on the spot than in the Middle East. Here, close friends and hateful foes of the U.S. live next door to each other. How can the U.S. best safeguard its interests in such a cauldron? Only one in five gave a "very effective" rating to the option of continued support for Israel. What is remarkable is that an equal number felt that recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization, a policy unacceptable to Israel, would be "very effective." Israel and the PLO on an equal footing in helping the U.S. safeguard its interests in the Middle East—that is the view of the Great Decisions 1988 respondents.

It is also noteworthy that, of all the alternatives offered, "U.S. military intervention in the Persian Gulf" received the lowest rating. In contrast, the option of accepting the Soviet Union in the Middle East peace process was viewed far more favorably. In other words, Soviets at the conference table do more for U.S. interests than Americans on cruisers in the Gulf. Still, improved relations with moderate Arab states were thought to help the U.S. by far the most in safeguarding its interests in the Middle East.

Rate the following in terms of their effectiveness in safeguarding U.S. interests in the Middle East.

	very effective	somewhat effective	not very effective	not effective
Continued strong support for Israel	22%	43%	26%	9%
Improved relations with moderate Arabs	34%	52%	12%	2%
Recognition of the PLO and support for its inclusion in negotiations	22%	39%	24%	15%
Acceptance of the Soviets as participants in the Middle East peace process	23%	44%	20%	12%
U.S. military intervention in Persian Gulf	13%	34%	29%	24%

Topic 6: THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT
Reassessing the Threat

Of the many environmental issues affecting foreign policy, air pollution with its effect on the ozone layer and climate change commanded the most attention among respondents, followed by overpopulation. Food and energy problems, as well as endangered species, aroused somewhat less concern. As for ways of dealing with environmental problems, the majority of respondents favored international agreements over unilateral domestic restrictions; few saw the salvation in tax incentives or in letting the free market work its magic.

Issue A. The most important environmental issue on the foreign policy agenda.

Air issues, such as slowing ozone depletion and climate change	37%
Water issues, such as cleaning up toxic wastes	18%
Food issues, such as preventing soil erosion	6%
Energy issues, such as ensuring adequate oil supply and regulating nuclear energy	9%
Overpopulation	28%
Protection of endangered species	1%
Conservation of biological diversity	2%

Issue B. What is the most effective way for the U.S. to respond to environmental problems?

Legislate strict domestic laws setting restrictions on pollution.	28%
Seek bilateral and multilateral agreements on environmental issues.	57%
Let free market forces deal with environmental problems.	3%
Give tax incentives to companies combating pollution.	12%

Topic 7: SOUTH KOREA:
The Future of Democracy

An ally in foreign policy but a competitor in the market place and a country struggling to move from autocracy to democracy, South Korea confronts the U.S. with some difficult choices. Asked whether they favored putting pressure on South Korea to liberalize its economy, two thirds of the respondents chose the option "yes, but with restraint." Only one in ten favored pressure without restraint, while two in ten opposed any pressure.

On the question of how to encourage the peaceful transfer of power, however, the dominant sentiment was clearly one of noninterference. Among the rest, support for the president-elect dwarfed support for the opposition by a 10-1 margin. A tiny fraction opted for a boycott of the Olympics, a sanction chosen by the Carter Administration in 1980 against the Soviet Union for invading Afghanistan, if the presidential transition did not go smoothly.

Issue A. Should the U.S. pressure South Korea to liberalize its economy?

Yes	12%
Yes, but with restraint	67%
No	21%

Issue B. ***What should the U.S. do to encourage a peaceful transfer of power in South Korea?***

Do nothing; it is a domestic matter.	60%
Endorse the president-elect and hold meetings with him to show approval.	34%
Support the opposition.	3%
Threaten to boycott the Olympics if the transition does not go smoothly.	3%

Which of the following policies would be most effective in serving U.S. security interests?

Continue U.S. participation in NATO, maintain current structure and strategy.	16%
Encourage greater European autonomy in defense without decreasing American commitment to NATO.	69%
Reduce U.S. participation in NATO.	13%
Withdraw from NATO and redirect resources to other areas, for example the Persian Gulf or the Pacific Basin.	1%

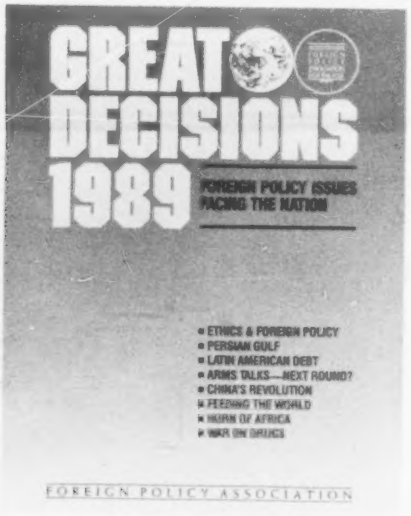
Topic 8: WESTERN EUROPE: Between the Superpowers

For nearly 40 years American troops have bolstered the defense of a Western Europe that has amassed unprecedented economic wealth and is on the verge of forming an economic union that numbers more people than the U.S. Respondents were asked what would serve U.S. security interests best in dealing with Western Europe. Only one in six of the respondents preferred to maintain the current structure and strategy of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. By the same token, only a minority opted for cutting U.S. participation in NATO, and hardly anybody wanted to see the U.S. withdraw from NATO altogether. The vast majority preferred a mixed course, namely, encouraging the Europeans to play a greater role in their defense while not diminishing the American contribution. In other words, no thinning out of American forces in Europe, but more bootstrap-pulling by the Europeans.

Totals may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

Helmut Norpoth, a public opinion expert, is the author of the *National Opinion Ballot Report.* His analysis is based on a tabulation prepared by the Calculogic Corporation of New York City.

Dr. Norpoth is a professor of political science at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He has served as a consultant for the New York Times/CBS News Poll and been the recipient of a number of research and travel grants and awards. A scholar of European and U.S. party politics, Dr. Norpoth has published numerous articles in the U.S. and West Germany.



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